

REMARKS

Claims 1, 2, 4, 5, and 17-31 have been examined. Claims 17-31 have been rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 102(b), and the Examiner has allowed claims 1, 2, 4 and 5.

I. Objection to the claims

A. Claims 21 and 22

The Examiner has objected to claims 21 and 22 because their scope is identical. Applicants have canceled claim 22, and submits that the objection is overcome.

B. Claim 25

The Examiner has objected to claim 25 because it contains a typographical error. Applicants submits that the amendments to the claim overcome the objection.

II. Rejection under 35 U.S.C. § 102(b) over U.S.P. 3,702,901 to Cherry ("Cherry")

Claims 17-31 have been rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 102(b) as being anticipated by Cherry.

A. Claim 17

Since claim 17 has been amended to include subject matter that is analogous to some of the allowable subject matter of claim 1, Applicants submit that it is patentable for at least this reason.

B. Claims 18-21

Since claims 18-21 depend upon claim 17, Applicants submit that they are patentable at least by virtue of their dependency.

C. Claim 22

Since claim 22 has been canceled without prejudice or disclaimer, the rejection of the claim is moot.

D. Claims 23-25

Since claims 23-25 depend upon claim 17, Applicants submit that they are patentable at least by virtue of their dependency.

E. Claim 26

Since claim 26 has been amended to include subject matter that is analogous to some of the allowable subject matter of claim 1, Applicants submit that it is patentable for at least this reason.

F. Claims 27-31

Since claims 27-31 depend upon claim 26, Applicants submit that they are patentable at least by virtue of their dependency.

III. Conclusion

In view of the above, reconsideration and allowance of this application are now believed to be in order, and such actions are hereby solicited. If any points remain in issue which the Examiner feels may be best resolved through a personal or telephone interview, the Examiner is kindly requested to contact the undersigned at the telephone number listed below.

AMENDMENT UNDER 37 C.F.R. § 1.111
U.S. Appln. No. 09/986,695

Attorney docket No. Q67179

The USPTO is directed and authorized to charge all required fees, except for the Issue Fee and the Publication Fee, to Deposit Account No. 19-4880. Please also credit any overpayments to said Deposit Account.

Respectfully submitted,

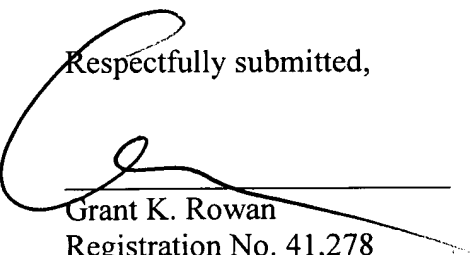
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